

## Wedding in the Mead Hall

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Summary: Astrid and Hiccup are getting married. But her mind is miles away. Bittersweet Hiccstrid oneshot inspired by HTTYD 2. Contains spoilers.

## Wedding in the Mead Hall

**\*\*This picture grabbed me while I was supposed to be working on other things. Enjoy.\*\***

## Wedding in the Mead Hall

The interior of the Mead Hall is decorated to within an inch of its life. The walls are strewn with vines and lanterns and the small, hardy purple flowers that grow all over Berk. The people are decorated, too: they've dug out their fanciest clothes, even though right after the wedding they'll change and go right back to work. There's food and drink piled on top of a heavy table at the back of the hall: fresh bread and cheese and mead and ale and fruit and Fishlegs' mother has somehow found enough time and ingredients for a cake. Valka has made sheep kebabs ("They're famous," she'd said, and Astrid believes her, but not for the reason the woman thinks)â€"she can smell them from where she stands, facing Hiccup, near the Hall's central hearth.

There are still a few holes in the roof where wood shingles got pulled away with the ice. They've been patched over with leather temporarily while more shingles are made. It's been hard to make enough, quickly enough, to keep up with the need. Astrid's hands are raw and blistered from hours and hours of chopping and cutting and prying, and her damaged skin contrasts painfully with the delicacy of her wedding dress. The garment was already half done when everything happened. Her mother finished it in a rush after Gobber and the others talked Astrid and Hiccup into moving up their wedding date. It fits her a little too loosely now; she hasn't eaten or slept enough

in weeks. She's been busy, like everyone else, but her schedule isn't the only reason.

Hiccup is smiling at her, his face bright and sweet and eager like she's the most perfect thing he's ever seen. She's seen the expression before, but she understands it more fully now. He still has the soft peach fuzz on his face. It makes her sad that she doesn't know whether it's there because he hasn't had a spare minute to shave, or if he's forgotten, or if he's decided to let it keep growing. It's the kind of conversation they haven't had time for. Everything else has been more important.

He has circles under his eyes; he hasn't been sleeping either. He's always in the forge repairing the villagers' tools after they break on the Alpha's confounded ice, or in meetings with the elders trying to assess who needs what and how long they can afford to wait before they get it.

Valka is watching them, a proud but bittersweet expression on her face. Hiccup had said he was glad his mom was there, after the battle, but she sticks mostly with the dragons and is stiff and tongue-tied around the elders. It makes sense; they keep looking at her like she's a ghost, and she's hardly talked to anyone human in two decades. She's been latching onto Hiccup whenever he has a spare minute, asking him questions and trying to educate him as quickly as possible about the new dragon species that are now intermingling with the ones already on Berk. She won't stop touching his hair, and he doesn't complain. That irks Astrid a bit: she feels possessive when it comes to his hair. She cuts it herself, and she's the one who puts the braids in it. She's the one who runs her fingers through the blunt, silky auburn strands when they jump on Toothless for a midnight joyride and he leans his head back against her in complete trust. She doesn't want to share it with anyone else.

It doesn't matter now, though: they're holding hands (his are damp and shaky from nerves and sport fresh burn scars from the forge) and repeating their vows, they've nearly reached the end of the ceremony and he's pushing a beautiful silver ring onto her finger. She feels guilty that he must have spent extra time making it, since he's had so many other things to do.

But that's not the only thing she feels guilty about, and her stomach twists as she looks at the skinny, exhausted, green-eyed boy in front of her. He'd almost died, the day everything went horribly wrong, but not just for the reason people think. Astrid knows what prompted Drago Bludvist to attack Valka's sanctuary when he did, and why he went to Berk so soon. Her friends on the boat with her at the time know too, but they haven't mentioned it since; she doesn't know if it's to help her save face, or if they just don't realize the true consequences of her words.

It's eating her up inside, though. She was unaware that Hiccup and his family were in the sanctuary when she was blabbing about him and Berk's dragons to Drago, but that doesn't change the fact that they all could have been killed, not just Stoick. And it's all because of her. She talked her friends into kidnapping Eret and going to Drago, and she's the one who decided, without thinking, to intimidate him into letting them go by telling him all about their home: by puffing it up, making it sound dangerous. It had failed, spectacularly; it was like throwing a tasty cod in front of a dragon. And now she's

working herself to the bone for Berk, for Hiccup, trying to make amends.

Hiccup doesn't know what she said to Drago. She hasn't told him: she's not sure how he'll react. He's a kind, forgiving person; he always has been, and it's obvious by the way he accepts Valka's attention that he still loves her even though her presence has to sting him like a flesh wound.

But she's afraid that if she tells him, then every time he looks at her he'll hear the roar of falling ice, and the snap of the dragon traps as they crush their victims' wings. He'll see the devastation wrought on Berk by the Alpha's breath, the aftermath of the terrifying blast that broke apart so much of what he had labored to create. He'll look at her and be reminded again that if they'd all just hunkered down on Berk like they'd been told, his father might still be alive.

Maybe he won't be able to look at her at all.

"I now pronounce you man and wife!" says Spitelout. Astrid isn't thrilled that he's the one officiating their wedding—that honor belongs to another who isn't here anymore, but Jorgenson is still a high-ranking member of the village and they can't afford to offend him.

Gobber is the first to cheer, his clunky face beaming as though Hiccup is his own son. She can already picture him dangling their future babies on his knee, letting them chew on his prosthetic attachments. Their friends whistle loudly and the dragons allowed into the hall start a horrendously loud cacophony of roars and grunts. She hopes they don't get carried away and blow the roof off the building.

Hiccup reaches for her waist, shyly this time, and pulls her into him gently. They haven't planned the kiss, either. There's a miscommunication about the angle and their noses bump together. The villagers laugh loudly and out of the corner of her eye she can see Snotlout smirking.

"We can do better," Hiccup whispers, and this time his mouth presses to hers in the ardent, familiar way she hasn't yet tired of. He wraps his arm around her back and tugs her closer. She can feel his heart pounding through his ceremonial tunic. She shuts her eyes. Their friends whoop and whistle catcalls.

She'll tell him soon. She will. He deserves to know.

Just not today.

**\*\*Like? Don't like? Review! -Freya \*\***

End  
file.